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ABSTRACT

The Enrichment Triad Model proposed by Joseph Renzulli offers guidelines for planning instruction for gifted students that can foster wide reading for specific purposes. The model is based on three different types of enrichment. The first type includes general exploratory activities designed to expose learners to areas in which they may be interested and that they may explore later in greater depth. The second type of activities develops thinking and feeling processes, such as critical, divergent, creative, and productive thinking, as well as focusing on problem solving skills, awareness development, and sensitivity training; and the third type involves individual projects--in-depth studies that result in a product, such as publishable reports. While all three of these enrichment types involve literal comprehension, the second and third types of activities demand inferential and critical comprehension as well. Since students must understand the various meanings of words in order to read and practice inquiry skills, vocabulary development is an integral part of the enrichment program. Furthermore, ample practice in notetaking, outlining, and organizing the information gathered allows the student to use study skills in a meaningful and challenging way. (Specific reading activities congruent with each enrichment type are presented.) (RI)

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# ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE GIFTED READER

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## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE GIFTED READER

There are many activities parading under the banner of gifted education that may be intrinsically valuable but are inappropriate for gifted and talented students. Instruction for the gifted reader should follow an enrichment model that provides activities which are qualitatively different from those found in the regular curriculum. Often gifted students are placed in individualized programs in which they read at their own pace. Unfortunately, they frequently use the same materials as other students. This approach represents an attempt to meet certain needs of learners; however, an effective program must also differentiate in areas such as content, learning style, and teaching strategies. The activities suggested in this article will follow a model that attempts such differentiation.

### The Enrichment Triad Model

The Enrichment Triad Model proposed by Renzulli (1977) offers guidelines for planning instruction for gifted students. It is based on three different types of enrichment. Although Type I (General Exploratory Activities) and Type II (Group Training Activities) are suitable for all learners, they are important for the intellectual development of gifted and talented learners. These two types deal with strategies for expanding students' interests and

developing their thinking and feeling processes. Furthermore, they provide background and support for Type III Enrichment (Individual Projects) which is particularly appropriate for gifted students. In all these activities, Renzulli emphasizes respecting the students' interests, learning styles, and allowing them to pursue topics of their own choosing. Nevertheless, the most important consideration is to provide opportunities for the development of inquiry skills at advanced levels.

## Relating the Model to Reading

Clearly, if students are to reach the ultimate goal of the model, that is conducting firsthand inquiries at an advanced level, they must do a great deal of reading. Renzulli advises educators to develop the so-called lower mental processes since they serve as stepping stones to more creative and productive endeavors. For the reading teacher, this means ensuring that gifted students can comprehend at the literal level.

While all three enrichment types involve literal comprehension, Type II and Type III both demand inferential and critical comprehension as well. Since students must understand the various meanings of words in order to read and practice inquiry skills, vocabulary development must be an integral part of the program. Specific reading activities congruent with each enrichment type are presented below.

### Type I Enrichment: General Exploratory Activities

Activities of this type are designed to expose the learners to areas in which they may be interested and consequently explore in greater depth. Renzulli suggests three general guidelines for planning Type I Enrichment:

1. The teacher must monitor the students' progress carefully to ensure that they work diligently, evaluate their own products, and eventually arrive

at alternative suggestions for further study.

2. The teacher should expose students to a wide variety of topics from which they can select problems for independent study.

3. The teacher should note areas in which students manifest interest. For example, if a teacher observes that a student is interested in rocks, then some Type II activities should focus on related information.

Obviously, reading is basic to pursuing most exploratory activities. For example, interest centers usually involve reading related experiences. Furthermore, the use of resource persons and field trips serves not only to provide information but also to provoke curiosity, thus stimulating students to do increased reading.

(1) Interest Centers. Interest centers need not be limited to the usual classroom reference materials. A center on history, for instance, might include information about the work of historians and the contributions they have made in reconstructing events of the past from overlooked documents, unpublished letters, and old newspapers. Local or state history books, old maps, newspapers, advertisements or sample business records might encourage students to do investigations about their own locality.

(2) Resource Persons. Resource persons should be enthusiastic about their professions. For maximum benefit, students should read about the topic to be discussed prior to the visit. This will enable them to formulate a list of questions in order to interview their guests.

(3) Field Trips. Field trips, to be effective, should emanate from topics being studied. From their reading, students can decide on appropriate visitation sites. In addition, they should complete the arrangements for the trip when feasible.

Type II Enrichment: Group Training Activities

Type II Enrichment is concerned with the development of thinking and feeling processes. They are often described as critical, divergent, creative, and productive thinking, problem solving, awareness development as well as sensitivity training. Systems, such as those developed by Bloom (1956), Krathwohl (1964), and Guilford (1967), can be used to classify these cognitive and affective behaviors. Moreover, Renzulli uses the following terms to define many of the same behaviors which are appropriate for Type II Enrichment.

| | |
|---|---|
| Brainstorming | Fluency |
| Observation | Flexibility |
| Classification | Originality |
| Interpretation | Elaboration |
| Analysis | Hypothesizing |
| Evaluation | Awareness |
| Comparison | Appreciation |
| Categorization | Value Clarification |
| Synthesis | Commitment |

Group training activities that utilize such behaviors are intended to develop processes of thinking, not to teach specific content. However, students often acquire factual knowledge as a by-product.

Frequently, print is used to develop thinking processes. Words and sentences are used in brainstorming, classifying, analyzing, evaluating, comparing, and in numerous other ways. Activities can be developed at almost every reading level; the vocabulary may change, but the process remains the same.

(1) Classification. In classification activities, students are presented with a list of words and told to group them according to a schema. Specific directions can vary. Sometimes, words and titles may be presented and students instructed to match them. In other instances, they might be told to arrange the words into categories and supply an appropriate title. The following list of words could be used in a classification activity.

Students arrange the words into three groups under the headings: birds, dinosaurs, and man.

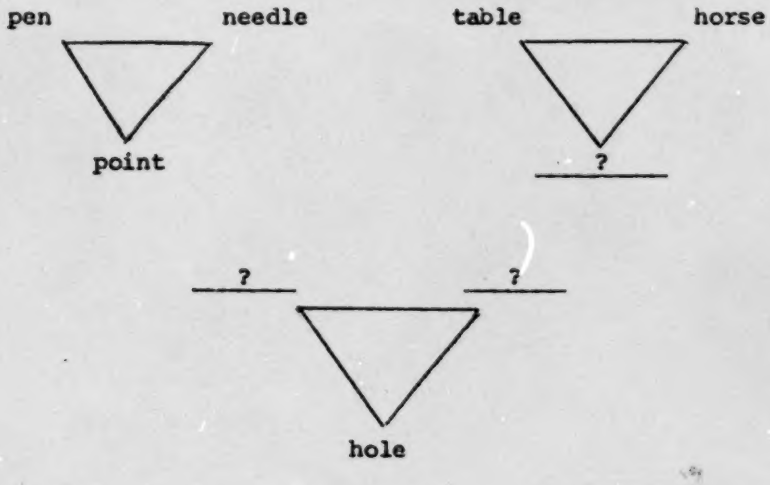
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| brontosaurus | swift | neanderthal |
| pithecanthropus | trachodon | junco |
| peking | australopithecine | diplodocus |
| warbler | triceratops | grouse |

(2) Evaluation. For a group evaluation activity, a teacher may read a short story to the students and have them suggest possible titles. All responses should be listed on the board. Then students analyze and evaluate the titles for suitability and uniqueness. Inasmuch as Type II Enrichment focuses on group training, consensus should be reached as to which title is the most appropriate and original. This activity extends beyond evaluation since interpretation and synthesis are requisite to selecting a title.

(3) Comparison. Many times comparisons require fluency, flexibility, and originality in thinking. They can be understood more readily with the aid of a graphic display.

The names of two unrelated objects can be placed at the top of an inverted triangle. Students identify the attributes of each object, determine which one is descriptive of both, and write the descriptor

at the bottom of the triangle. Sometimes the descriptor can be written at the bottom, thus students have to identify two objects that share that attribute.




(4) Synthesis. Often, many behaviors are involved in synthesis activities. Students might interpret and evaluate before synthesizing, and if it is a group assignment, they will also brainstorm. The activity which follows incorporates all of these behaviors as well as fosters originality.

Students are presented with stimulus phrases and told to find two rhyming words that mean about the same as each phrase. For example, "a fresh vegetable" might be a "clean bean." Stimulus phrases that may be used include:

| | |
|---|---|
| a dejected boy | a listless sea bird |
| a timid house insect | a busy bee's workshop |
| a droopy flower | a comic rabbit |

(5) Value Clarification. Since the purpose of these activities is clarification of values, students will probably brainstorm, interpret, analyze, evaluate, compare, synthesize, and perhaps develop appreciation. The following

activity embodies all of these behaviors along with originality.

Students examine the values expressed in proverbs and discuss their relevancy today. Later, they can rewrite the proverbs and read the rewritten versions to the class. For example, "Haste makes waste" could be written as "Accelerated execution often produces a faulty result." The proverbs may be traditional such as:

Look before you leap.
Where there's a will, there's a way.
Birds of a feather flock together.
The early bird gets the worm.

Although Type II activities promote advanced levels of thinking, Renzulli cautions that their exclusive use would result in an unbalanced program. Students would spend all of their time practicing processes rather than becoming involved in real-life inquiry situations, such as those classified as Type III Enrichment.

Type III Enrichment: Individual Projects

In Type III activities, students select and investigate topics of interest. However, the teacher must help them to: 1) identify and focus on a specific project, 2) acquire methodological resources and investigative skills, and 3) find appropriate outlets for their products. Since Type I activities exposed students to a variety of experiences that helped to identify topics, they now are ready to investigate these areas. Teachers, therefore, must make them aware of references that are available for conducting in-depth studies. Furthermore, the focus of the investigation may be on the

past, present or future as well as on local, national or international concerns.

(1) Historical Investigation. A school's history may be written by students and published in a local newspaper. To gather the facts, former graduates can be interviewed. Once the data has been analyzed and assembled, students could visit the editorial offices of the local newspaper in order to secure advice on composing the article. A local writer might even be willing to help at the revision stage.

(2) Environmental Investigation. Since limited energy resources is a topic of universal concern, students may pursue research about nontraditional forms of energy, such as synthetic fuels, windmills, and solar power. Information can be secured from materials published by the United States Government Printing Office, current periodicals, and interviews with local utility officials. Utilizing accumulated facts, a position paper can be generated and disseminated to the local newspaper as well as to state and national legislators.

(3) Consumer Investigation. Everyone has experienced being a consumer. In order to develop awareness of product quality and price, students should be exposed to information from government sources and consumer periodicals. A popular item, such as a cassette recorder, can be evaluated. Comparison of various features and prices can be contrasted on a chart. Finally, the students can rank order the different brands according to quality and price.

Renzulli believes that approximately half of the time gifted students spend in enrichment activities should be devoted to Type III pursuits. He feels that when a student's investigation culminates in a product, the teacher should assist in finding a publishing outlet. Publication of students' products makes a program meaningful and different from most gifted programs.

## Conclusion

The Enrichment Triad Model offers guidelines for planning instruction for gifted readers. Its use fosters wide reading for specific purposes. Since students are reading varied references, vocabulary is likely to increase and comprehension to improve. Furthermore, ample practice in notetaking, outlining, and organizing the information gathered allows the student to use study skills in a meaningful and challenging way.

The three types of activities delineated in this article suggest ways of determining students' interests, training their thinking processes, and developing high level inquiry skills. Most of these activities require interaction among students. Not only do they acquire content knowledge through this participation, they also gain insight into the dynamics of group processes. Finally, through involvement in individual projects, students are provided opportunities to assume responsibility and thereby develop a sense of commitment.

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